

the philosophy by which she lived her life of "leaving it better than you found it."

Verna Viola Brown was born on September 18, 1923 in Keota, Oklahoma. Ms. Duty relocated to California and became a lifelong resident of Riverdale, California a small farming community in the San Joaquin Valley.

She was the wife of the late Mr. Joe Duty, a farm worker and she gained a deep appreciation and love for those who labored in the fields. Her pride and joy was being the mother of my dear friend Mayor Alan Autry of the City of Fresno. They shared a special bond and she was his biggest supporter as a mother, friend, confidante and hero. Her spiritual beliefs form an inspirational foundation of values for all who knew her.

Mrs. Duty is survived by her only child, Fresno Mayor Alan Autry and his wife Kimberlee of Fresno; her grandchildren Lauren, Heather and Austin; her brothers Tony, Gene, Alvin and Ronnie and sisters Gladys, Freda, Violet and Elaine.

Although the passing of Mrs. Verna Duty brings sadness to those whose lives she touched, her sincere and compassionate spirit and the ways in which she left this world a better place will never be forgotten.

HONORING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BAILEY'S CROSSROADS ROTARY CLUB

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Bailey's Crossroads Rotary Club.

The Bailey's Crossroads Rotary Club was chartered on March 12, 1977, under the sponsorship of the Falls Church Rotary Club. The club was known as "The Early Birds" due to their 7:30 a.m. Friday meeting time at a Bob's Big Boy restaurant.

There were 27 members at the club's onset, which was prior to the approval of female membership. When Rotary International approved membership for women in 1989, the club led the way and was among the first to induct a woman into Rotary.

Bailey's Crossroads Rotary Club continues to maintain a focus on the Four Avenues of Service, both internationally and in the local community. The following activities are highlights of the club's service sponsorships: Interact Leadership Club at JEB Stuart High School; "Family Day"; delivery of Thanksgiving food baskets to the elderly during the holiday season; food and clothing drives to assist the needy; a Rotary Centennial construction project; and consistent support for matching grants projects.

Bailey's Crossroads Rotary Club has consistently been a leader in the number of members who are Paul Harris Fellows, having contributed \$1,000 or more to the Annual Programs Fund. The club has given a total of \$312,000 to the Rotary Foundation since 1977. The Bailey's club is known throughout Rotary District 7610 as the "Can Do Club" and has received numerous awards including Outstanding Club. I am proud to have served as 1 of the 29 past presidents, and commend

current president, Joseph W. Luquire, for his dynamic leadership and for the excellent reputation of the club.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I congratulate Bailey's Crossroads Rotary Club on its continued success and contributions to their community and Nation. On the occasion of their 30th anniversary, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging this outstanding and distinguished organization.

IN HONOR OF SYNOVUS BEING NAMED ONE OF THE BEST COMPANIES IN AMERICA

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend a company that has made Columbus, GA, the Second Congressional District of Georgia and the United States proud. Synovus, a diversified financial services holding company based in Columbus, GA, recently was named by Forbes magazine to their Platinum 400 List of America's Best Big Companies.

To create the list, Forbes looked at more than 1,000 publicly traded companies with at least \$1 billion in revenue, and chose 400 based on metrics, earnings forecasts, corporate governance ratings, and other public company information. Of course, Forbes selected these companies not just for their financial performance, but also for their leadership, innovation, and execution.

The story of Synovus epitomizes the American spirit, exemplifying the kindness, innovation and enterprising character that has come to define this country. In the 1880s, a mill worker at Eagle and Phenix Mill in Columbus caught her dress in a piece of machinery. As her dress tore, her life savings, which she had sewn into her hem thinking it was the safest place for her money, spilled across the floor.

G. Gunby Jordan, the mill's secretary and treasurer, happened by and offered to keep her money in the mill safe and pay her monthly interest on the deposits. He soon offered the same service to all the mill workers, a system which years later, inspired Mr. Gunby to establish the institution that became Columbus Bank and Trust Company—Synovus' lead bank.

More than a century has passed since that torn dress, and like the act that founded Synovus, the company has continued to operate on the principles of integrity, character, treating people right and doing the right thing.

And it has served the company in good stead: Today, Synovus is one of the largest and strongest financial institutions in the Southeast, with 39 banks and \$31 billion in assets.

Indeed, I am proud to have this company in my district. Please join me in congratulating Synovus and its 14,000 employees on receiving this award.

NEW PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER URGED TO WORK FOR SIKH SOVEREIGNTY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, recently elections were held in Punjab. The voters turned out the Congress Party government and restored the Shiromani Akali Dal to power. This means that Parkash Singh Badal returns as Chief Minister.

The Congress Party claims to be secular, but the fact is that it presided over the massacre of Sikhs that took the lives of over a quarter of a million Sikhs. It was the party that carried out the military attack on the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the center and seat of the Sikh religion. On the other hand, the Akali Dal has historically been the pro-Sikh party. However, during the tenure of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, Punjab did reclaim its water rights and cancel the agreements that allowed diversion of that water to other states. The bill implementing the cancellation explicitly declared the sovereignty of Punjab.

As you know, Madam Speaker, Punjab, Khalistan declared its independence on October 7, 1987.

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, has written to Chief Minister Badal urging him to keep his campaign promises of a better economic life for Punjab farmers, of clean government, and to reclaim the capital city of Chandigarh for Punjab. He also urged Mr. Badal to declare again the independence of Punjab, Khalistan and to work for a free and fair vote.

The essence of democracy is the right to self-determination. As such, a free and fair vote on the issue of independence is called for if India still wishes to be looked upon as the democracy it claims to be. The Indian government is sending out its sycophants to spin the Punjab elections as having "debunked" the Khalistan movement, but in fact, quite the opposite is the truth of the matter.

I call on this Congress to stand up for freedom and join in urging the Punjab Legislative Assembly to declare independence again, and to urge India to allow a free and fair plebiscite on the matter of independence for Khalistan, for the Christians of Nagaland, and for Kaslunir, as promised in 1948, as well as all others who seek their freedom. I also call for a stop to American aid and trade with India until basic human rights are respected and everyone there is allowed to live in freedom, dignity, prosperity, and security.

Madam Speaker, I would like to place the Council of Khalistan's letter to Chief Minister Badal into the RECORD at this time with the permission of the House.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,

Washington, DC, February 28, 2007.

Hon. PARAKSH SINGH BADAL,
Chief Minister of Punjab, Chandigarh, Punjab,
India.

DEAR CHIEF MINISTER BADAL: Congratulations on your victory in the Punjab elections and your return as Chief Minister. You promised the return of clean government to Punjab. That would be a welcome relief for the people of Punjab. You also promised free electricity and Rs4 per kilo for wheat flour and Rs20 per kilo for lentils for the poor. We

welcome these promises and urge you to implement them as soon as possible.

I call upon you to get Chandigarh back for Punjab. As you know, Punjab built Chandigarh to be its capital and it rightfully belongs to Punjab. It is time to get it back.

We also urge you to maintain. Captain Amarinder Singh's water policy. His government cancelled the unfair agreements that allowed the diversion of Punjab's water to nonriparian states. In that bill, the Legislative Assembly explicitly declared the sovereignty of Punjab. Unfortunately, the Congress Party, which presided over the massacre of Sikhs, is an anti-Sikh party. The Akali Dal has historically been the pro-Sikh party. Yours is the party that called on the Sikh Nation to prepare ourselves for "the long struggle to liberate Khalistan." You are presiding over a Sikh political and religious institution that controls the gurdwaras in Punjab. Remember that Professor Darshan Singh, an Akali and former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, has said, "If a Sikh is not for Khalistan, he is not a Sikh."

Each morning and evening, we pray, "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa," the Khalsa shall rule. Do you say this prayer sincerely? Will Delhi let you implement the new price structure you promised? They have done everything in their power to keep the Sikhs oppressed, including imposing President's rule on Punjab nine times. They have been responsible for the murders of a quarter of a million Sikhs, according to figures compiled by the Punjab State Magistracy and published in *The Politics of Genocide* by Inderjit Singh Jaijee. The Movement Against State Repression reports that over 52,000 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners without charge or trial, some since 1984! The late General Narinder Singh said that "Punjab is a police state."

You have promised to end "the dark and corrupt legacy of despotic dictatorship." There is only one way to do so. That is to declare the sovereign independence of Khalistan. The Legislative Assembly can do this and should do it. This would elevate you immediately from Chief Minister to Prime Minister. Self-determination is the essence of democracy. Why can't India do the democratic thing and allow the people of Punjab, Khalistan to vote in a free and fair plebiscite on the question of independence? What are they afraid of?

Again I congratulate you and urge you to work to end the oppression of Sikhs and keep the interests of the Sikh Nation foremost in your mind as you embark upon your term as Chief Minister. I urge you to work to regain the sovereignty that is our birthright.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

TRIBUTE TO THE TOWNSHIP OF MILLBURN, ESSEX COUNTY, NJ

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the township of Millburn, Essex County, NJ, a vibrant community I am proud to represent. All through 2007 the good citizens of Millburn township will be celebrating the township's 150th anniversary with special events including a sesquicentennial parade in June and an anniversary ball in October.

Millburn began as a colonial settlement with agricultural origins, followed by a 19th century mill/factory economy and eventually became a

Victorian—and later—residential community. There are many examples of this rich history still present in the township, from the Hessian House, the Cora Hartshorn Arboretum, and the Paper Mill Playhouse to the historic districts, Short Hills Park and Wyoming.

Millburn township was once part of Elizabethtown and Newark settlements in New Jersey, created by a grant from Charles II to his brother James in 1664. In 1793, Springfield township was created including Millburn. In 1857, Springfield became part of the new Union County and Millburn became a separate township within Essex County.

After the Revolution, the Rahway River was dammed in five places to form mill ponds. Samuel Campbell built the first paper mill in 1790 and manufactured banknotes. Most of the early mills were paper mills, among them the Diamond Mill, now the site of the Paper Mill Playhouse, but hat mills eventually became dominant. In 1835, the Morris and Essex Railroad was finally completed, linking Millburn to the big cities in the East and the coal regions in the northwest.

Millburn has had many names, from Rum Brook, Vauxhall, Milltown, and Millville. In 1857, Millburn was decided upon, partly because many of the town's residents were from Scotland and the mill burn—Scot word for river or stream—reminded them of home. Later there were disputes over the spelling of Millburn, but the double-L advocates won.

In 1872, the Wyoming Land and Improvement Company purchased 100 acres of land and the first speculative real estate development was started and named Wyoming. Stewart Hartshorn acquired 1,552 acres to build his ideal village called Short Hills, the first planned commuter suburb in America.

Today, Millburn township has a population of approximately 19,735 and is comprised of Millburn, including the historic Wyoming district, South Mountain and Millburn Center areas, and Short Hills which includes the sections of Knollwood, Glenwood, Brookhaven, Country Club, Merrywood, Deerfield-Crossroads, Mountaintop, White Oak Ridge and Old Short Hills Estates.

Madam Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the residents of Millburn township on the celebration of 150 years of rich history of one of New Jersey's finest municipalities.

RECOGNIZING BRIAN PATRICK WESSLING FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Brian Patrick Wessling, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Brian has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Brian has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Brian Patrick Wessling for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF ROYALTY-IN- KIND FOR ENERGY ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am again introducing the Royalty-in-Kind for Energy Assistance Improvement Act. This bill is intended to make it possible for the Department of Interior to implement a provision in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 that was intended to provide a new way to assist low-income people to heat or cool their homes.

For several years before 2005, the Department of Interior had authority to develop "royalty-in-kind" arrangements under which companies developing federal oil could meet their required royalty payments by providing oil instead of cash. The Energy Policy Act expanded this provision to apply to natural-gas developers as well, and also added new authority for Interior to grant a preference to low-income consumers when disposing of natural gas it obtained under such an arrangement.

While this Energy Policy Act provision does not specifically reference the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), its implementation could benefit that program.

LIHEAP is intended to help low-income Americans pay for their heating and cooling costs. However, at current funding levels this critically important program serves less than 15 percent of those who qualify for it. Implementing the Energy Policy Act provision to grant a preference to low-income consumers would supplement LIHEAP funding and expand the amount of energy assistance available to the poor.

After enactment of the 2005 legislation, I joined my colleagues from Colorado in writing a letter to Interior Secretary Gail Norton asking her to consider beginning implementation of the new provision through a pilot program in Colorado. In the letter we emphasized the importance of helping this country's most vulnerable citizens, who are increasingly hard hit by rising energy costs.

In a reply to my office, the Interior Department responded that the Interior Department's lawyers had reviewed the Energy Policy Act provision and had concluded that as it now stands it could not be implemented because the current law "does not provide the Department with the authority or discretion to receive less than fair market value for the royalty gas or oil."

My bill is intended to correct the legal deficiencies in the provision as enacted to make it possible for the Interior Department to implement the program. In developing the legislation, my staff has reviewed the Interior Department's legal opinion and has consulted with the Interior Department's lawyers and with other legal experts. Based on that review, I think enactment of my bill will resolve the legal problems cited by the Interior Department and will enable the program to go forward.